

Instructions for Best Interest Staffing (BIS) Report and Selection

PURPOSE: To document the discussion and outcome of the BIS and provide the necessary information for the DCF Regional Director to review in authorizing an adoptive family that is in the best interest of a child in the custody of the Secretary of DCF.

TIMELINES: The BIS Report is sent to the Regional Director within 3 working days of the BIS, and the Regional Director authorizes the selection and returns the PPS 5341 to the CWCMP within 5 working days.

INSTRUCTIONS: The PPS 5341 may be used to report on a BIS for a set of siblings who will be adopted together by the same family. Sections regarding the child's individual needs or each child's specific relationships to the proposed adoptive families shall be completed for each child. Multiple families may be considered at a BIS and all families considered shall be clearly and distinctly specified on the form. Narratives shall be clear regarding which family is being referenced.

Section I: Identifying information for each child being considered at the BIS shall be noted. If this is a request to waive the BIS, sections II, III, and IV do not need to be completed.

Section II: For each child, note their strengths, basic needs, emotional needs and special needs in the boxes provided. Basic needs include food, clothing, safe environments, housing/utilities, medical/dental care, education and recreation. Specific children may also have additional basic needs. If the child has a diagnosis, note that under emotional needs. Special needs include physical, educational, and developmental. Information about how those needs are currently being met shall also be noted. Discuss any future anticipated needs. Provide information about the child's level of participation in the BIS, and what has been done to prepare them for adoption.

Section III: In the first box, note each child's attachment to each family (and its members) being considered and whether the child has ever lived with the family. Issues with background checks, trauma, or mental health concerns for each family member shall be noted in the second box, and how that might impact the safety or well-being of each child. If corrective measures have been taken, note how they have alleviated the concern. Good health is described as having a statement from a doctor or a completed health assessment completed by the adoptive parents' primary physicians and the medical professional finding no evidence of physical or mental illness that would conflict with the ability to care for the health, safety or welfare of the children. Explain if there are children close to the child's age that live in the household, and how that might affect the child. Note the family's explanation of their motivation to adopt the child(ren), and the potential for permanence of the relationship between the child(ren) and the proposed adoptive parents. Explain the parenting skills, strengths and weaknesses of each proposed adoptive family in meeting the all of the needs of each child being considered at the BIS. If there are areas of concern noted, describe the actions being taken to improve parenting skills, and the family's commitment to make needed changes. Note if the family has had the opportunity to advocate for other children, and under what circumstances. Explain whether the family has the funds to pay their bills and the changes they anticipate in adding another child to the household.

Section IV: Additional factors shall be addressed in the boxes provided. Describe the adoptive family's commitment to maintaining important connections for each child being considered at the BIS. Describe what the family has planned if something should happen to them and they are no longer able to care for the child. If the proposed adoptive family is a relative, describe any factors related to the history of past generations that may impact the adoption. If the proposed adoptive family is a foster family, explain their understanding of the difference between fostering and adopting, the impact of the adoption, and their willingness to delay fostering other children if necessary.

Section V: Provide the information necessary to request a waiver of the BIS. The date of PRT/Relinquishment, name of family, results of relative searches, and date of current placement need to be included.

Section VI: List the invitees/participants of the BIS Team, and note who voted.

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Section VII: Provide a narrative for the rationale and basis for the selection and non-selection of the families considered. The rationale shall be written in such a way that it can be shared (with confidential information redacted) with others, including prospective adoptive parents, as an explanation for why the BIS Team chose the adoptive family and how it is in the best interest of the child. If the child is 14 or older, explain how they feel about being adopted by the family chosen.

Section VIII: Rank the families considered at the BIS in the order of the selection for adoption of the child(ren). Note whether all necessary journal entries of PRT are approved or relinquishments are accepted.

Section IX: The Regional Director (or designee) signs the form and authorizes the family chosen by the BIS Team. If a family is not authorized, the CWCMP chooses another family considered at the BIS or holds another BIS and considers other families.

